

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

FAST-TRACK AUTHORITY

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 1998

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America states: "Congress has the power to lay and collect . . . Duties and to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations." Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution of the United States of America states: "Treaties with foreign governments shall be confirmed by a two-thirds majority of the Senate." However, over time, Congress has given away its Constitutional authority and responsibilities to the Executive Branch.

Take fast-track authority, for example. Fast-track proponents claim that this legislative authority is needed to expedite the negotiating process as well as consideration of the implementing legislation through the establishment of deadlines for various legislative stages, a prohibition on amendments, a limit on debate, and a requirement for an up-or-down vote. There are several myths and untruths associated with this argument, however.

The big myth is that the President needs fast track to negotiate trade agreements. The President already has the Constitutional power to conduct foreign affairs and negotiate international trade agreements. However, because Congress must approve any changes to U.S. law that result from trade agreements, fast track proponents purport that fast track is needed to strengthen the President's stance during trade negotiations and expedite consideration of the implementing legislation. The truth is, the President needs fast track so he can ignore the opinions of the vast majority of Members of Congress.

Fast-track authority, in theory, protects Congress from the delegation of Constitutional authority through the notifications and consultations the President must provide to Congress prior to, and during, trade negotiations. In practice, however, Congress has handed over its Constitutional powers on a silver platter. The President has ignored the directives of large minorities in Congress regarding environmental protection, labor standards and American jobs, then bought the votes of a few with personal promises to gain the simple majority needed for passage.

The fact is, the archetype fast-track legislative authority was designed to give the President additional authority to negotiate customs classifications only. Experience has shown item-by-item consideration of the tariff schedule by Congress to be an arduous process, so the President was granted the ability to negotiate the small points. The bottom line is, the original fast-track was never intended to grant the President the broad authority over a vast array of non-tariff issues he enjoys today.

Another myth claims that fast-track process is needed not only to negotiate, but to simply get the trade agreement through the legislative

process. Converse to popular thought, however, the fast-track procedure has rarely been implemented. Over 200 trade agreements have been enacted without fast track authority while only five trade agreements have been enacted under this procedure.

Clearly, fast-track authority has digressed from the original intentions of Congress. The President now has broad authority, while Members' hands are tied. Consultations are with a privileged few and merely a formality for the body as a whole. I have introduced legislation to authenticate fast-track legislative authority.

The Trade Act of 1974 recognizes the fast track mechanism as an "exercise of the rule-making power of the House . . ." and maintains the "constitutional right of either House to change its rules at any time, in the same manner and to the same extent as any other rule of the House." In other words, the House may change its rules as it sees fit. The erosion of fast-track legislative intent is more than enough reason for the House to change its rules.

The legislation, H. Res. 497, amends the rules of the House to require a two-thirds majority vote on any legislation that either authorizes the President to enter into a trade agreement that is implemented pursuant to fast-track procedures, or that implements a trade agreement pursuant to such procedures. By requiring a two-thirds vote rather than a simple majority, the President will no longer be able to ignore the concerns of the vast majority of Members during negotiations and sweeten the agreement later. Trade agreements will take a consensus of both the legislative and executive branches to negotiate—a constitutionally sound solution of which the Founding Fathers would be proud.

TRIBUTE TO BILL WILLIAMS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 1998

Mr. FARR. of California Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Bill Williams, soldier, civil servant and civic leader. Bill was born in Newburgh, New York. Mr. Williams passed away this past May. He began his military career in 1943 at the age of twenty and retired from the military, after serving for twenty years and in many capacities, as a highly decorated Major in 1963. Bill's decorations included two Bronze Stars with the "V" Device, two Purple Hearts, a Combat Infantry Badge, service ribbons for the Normandy Invasion, and five Battle Stars for his service in Europe and Korea.

Upon his retirement from the military, Bill began his second career which lasted another twenty years. He applied the knowledge he had gained as a Training Company Commander while in the Army to his peacetime job in the field of Personnel Management.

During those years, Bill also applied his leadership skills as an officer in service clubs

and veterans organizations. Bill was a life member of the Monterey Peninsula Kiwanis Club, including duties as Lieutenant Governor. He also held leadership posts in many of the other organizations of which he was a member: the Monterey Chapter of the Retired Officers Association, The Northern Military Order of the Purple Heart, The Northern California Region of TROA, The Masonic Liberty Lodge No. 70 of Paris France, and, The Pacific Grove Masonic Lodge No. 331.

I knew Bill as an active advocate for veterans. He kept me advised of matters of concern to the retired military community in the Fort Ord area. Bill vigorously pursued a site for a Veterans Cemetery on the grounds of the decommissioned Fort Ord. I greatly appreciated the work he did as a veteran's liaison in my Monterey office.

Bill leaves a loving wife of 49 years, Maria; his four daughters: Ginger, Debi, Kate and Elaine; and four grandchildren. We will all remember Bill as a fine example of leadership for his nation.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREATER COOPER AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH IN WEST OAKLAND

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 1998

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to congratulate the Greater Cooper African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on its 100th anniversary of missionary and community involvement in West Oakland held July 11, 1998. The church, which in 1897 had its humble beginnings on Campbell Street, moved to Union Street in 1929 and is presently located since 1940 at 1429 Myrtle Street, one block west of Market Street amongst the beautiful Victorians of Old Oakland.

Many Bay Area residents will recall the years during and after World War II when Greater Cooper's membership grew to more than 500 as many servicemen passing through the area made Cooper Zion their church home. In the 1950's and 1960's, under the leadership of Rev. G. Lynwood Fauntleroy, Greater Cooper shared a music and radio ministry. Fond memories come with thoughts of their renowned Cathedral Choir, which graced the airwaves with their melodious renditions of anthems and spirituals.

Through the years this fine church has reached out to all segments of the community through summer youth programs, childcare centers, senior citizens' programs, food ministries for the less fortunate, and a mentoring program for young boys.

The current pastor, the Reverend John A. Harrison, Jr., has the honor of heading this centennial celebration. Since November of 1997, the Greater Cooper has sponsored

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